

## SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

## Plutes Talk for Socialism and Don't Realize it.--Purpose of the Early Political "Rallies" in Missouri.

It is interesting to hear some of the arguments that the capitalists use in bolstering up their system. In so doing they often use the Socialist argument. Last week a tenant farmer told me of the argument used by a Benton business man in opposition to the single tax amendment voted on two years ago. Said the business man and landlord:

"The single tax won't hurt us, but it will make it harder on you. We will raise the rent. When the town board ordered me to build concrete side-walks around the houses that I rent here, I built the walks and raised the rent a dollar a month. The tenant pays it. So it will be on the farm if the single tax is adopted."

Here you have the system in a nutshell--and from a capitalist source. In the long run the tenant pays for the ground, the building, the repairs, the taxes and interest on the investment, and the landlord still owns the house.

It is the same with farm land. If it be in a drainage district, the man who works the soil pays not only all other expenses, but the drainage tax as well. The landlord, AS SUCH, can pay nothing. He produces nothing and, therefore, has no income except what the law permits him to take for the use of the land. And the law, which he himself has made, permits him to take all he can get--which is all above a miserable existence for those who work the soil.

A few years ago, in this county, no landlord would have admitted what the above landlord is quoted as admitting. They and their organs made us believe that they were great public benefactors, "developing the country," and so on. The tenant was made to believe that his landlord was his little god because he supplied him with coarse grub and rags while working for his board and clothes and yet coming out in debt.

And at election times the landlord reminded Mr. Tenant of how he had been "accommodated." And Mr. Tenant would walk six miles to vote for more "accommodation."

This system of how the workers are voted was strongly impressed on me some 15 years ago when I trotted with "the party." At that time the primary settled it, and I was very much interested in a candidate who seemed to have the odds against him in a strong township. I went to see about it. When a capitalist politician goes into a community to find out how things are going, he doesn't bother about consulting the people--except, perhaps, as a blind. He goes to the boss. As a matter of appearance he may shake hands, set 'em up, and so on, but for information about what these people are going to do on election day, he goes to the boss.

From my contact with voters of this particular community it appeared bad for my man, and I went to the boss and told him my fears. But the boss will be all right, he said encouragingly. "We are accommodating a great many men who are under OBLIGATIONS to us, and we will see that they get to the polls."

And "we" did. Our man carried the township that, a week before the election an ordinary observer would have thought he would lose by 2 to 1.

The great mass of people know next to nothing of how they are "worked" in the capitalist game of politics. The interests of all capitalists are the same--so far as the workers are concerned. And the interests of all workers are the same--so far as the capitalists are concerned. Their interests are exactly opposites. The capitalist lives from that portion of Labor's product that the system permits him to take. Labor exists on that which is left. Hence it is clear that any political battle that is not between these conflicting interests is a sham battle.

The function of officialdom is to run the government in the interest of the class it represents and settle disputes. If disputes, called law-suits, arise between Capital and Labor, it is to the interest of capitalists to have men representing their class in office--just as it is to the interest of the liquor traffic to have "wet" men, or to the prohibitionists to have "dry" men in office. All of such men may be perfectly honest, yet they see things differently--according to their training, education and surroundings.

The capitalists are largely in the minority, but through ownership they control everything--and work in harmony. They are very closely associated through banking and other interest, and when an election is near, the heads of these interests decide who shall be on "the ticket," and who shall not.

Usually but one or two men of a township are consulted--as, for instance, A. J. Matthews and John Marshall of Sikeston; Ben Marshall of Blodgett; the Andersons at Commerce; Capt. Lightner at Illinois; Dr. Cannon at Farnell, and so on.

If all of these agree, "the ticket" goes thru like greased light-

ning. But if there be disagreement as to who shall be "nominated" in the primary, of sufficient magnitude to cause a rupture then there is a lively scrap at the primary over, perhaps, one or two candidates on which they failed to agree. But the men put up by the opposition are of exactly the same cloth, and no matter which wins, the capitalists will unite in their support--and the workers lose in any event. This is what the politicians call "sticking to the party" and "vote 'er straight."

The foregoing is a picture of political conditions in a Democratic county. In counties where the prejudices of the voters run in the Republican channel the same conditions exist--except that the capitalists, their politicians and their newspaper organs masquerade under a different name. In either case the great mass of people have nothing to do with the candidates shall be, and their only privilege is to shout and vote for the candidates of their masters--and pay taxes.

Capitalist politics is a game in which the principal players are under cover, and success depends on which side can fool the most people.

Did any Democratic newspaper in the 14th district receive an invitation to attend the recent meeting at Cape Girardeau to make arrangements for the big blowout on the 14th? Or are editors merely expected to dance when the bosses pull the strings? Or, in other words, are the Democratic newspapers in the district expected to do the boosting when told to do so by the bosses?--I'll be impudent.

Sure, Mike! You guessed it all down the line. Can it be that a man of your newspaper experience is just now beginning to see? The "rally" at the Cape is simply a meeting of the job-holders and of those who want jobs. To give the thing color, a big feed is being prepared for Rube. Every two years Rube gets something for nothing--mostly hot air. The rest of the time he pays the freight.

At an appointed time the bosses get together and agree on who shall hold the jobs next time. But Rube is not in on this. When the "state" has been fixed up, "the party" press bureau is set in motion and the party organs are furnished ready-made "editorials" boosting the machine candidates. If you refuse to boost, you don't get none of that constitutional amendments pie next fall.

Sec? They don't have to consult the editors. They control the legal printing that others must pay for, and the editor who refuses to tout his horn according to the music furnished is not considered in the band.

In county politics the courthouse printing and the "announcement fee" is the bait that catches "ye editor. Just now only two county papers are being favored--one at Sikeston and one here. But watch this next year. All will be given just enough to hold them--and it works.

Three years ago the Chaffee Signal got mighty "raw" about the public printing all going to one paper here. It threatened the bunch with extermination. But when the campaign opened a year later the Signal was given about a page of legal advertising and it became the most docile critter you ever met.

If it is true that Governor Major intends to be a candidate for United States senator, it will become the duty of the Democratic coterie of the State to defeat him most decisively in the primary. The party cannot afford to be burdened with him as a candidate in the future as it is burdened with him now as governor.--Jackson Cash-Book.

Why didn't you and other Democratic organs tell your readers this four years ago? You knew it then as well as now, and the only reason that it is being admitted is because too many people know it.

There is nothing wrong with Major--except that he is clumsy. He is just like Stone, Reed and other successful politicians--only he doesn't understand "hiding the shells."

He belongs to the Barker class, and made just as big an ass of himself while he was attorney-general as Barker has made of himself. Therefore you knew his calibre then as now.

The reason so many Democratic organs are now criticizing state officials is clear to almost anybody but the editors. It is a scrap between the state ring and the national ring. The state ring is composed of state officials and their appointees. The national ring is composed of the two senators, the congressmen and their appointees.

Usually there is harmony among these. But Major, fool like, is after Reed's job as United States senator, and the national ring is trying to head him off. As I see it, this is why these big "rallies," such as at Cape Girardeau, are being held in different parts of the state, which Stone and Reed and the congressmen attend. The purpose is to organize a cam-

paign of extermination against the governor and his bunch, and fill the state ticket next year with "clean men" who will not be so ambitious as to want the jobs of the higher ups. To bear out this view I take the following from a Cape paper of Saturday evening:

"Many local Democrats are wondering if the present state of office holders will have the nerve to come here for the big speaking next Thursday. Should they bring all their relatives that are now on the pay roll there would not be enough barbecue to go round."

Another Cape paper, on Sunday morning, contained this:

"Twelve State officials at Jefferson City, whose combined salaries are fixed at \$40,000 a year are spending that much more of the state's money by employing members of their families. In other words, twelve officials, elected by the people to draw \$40,000 a year, are virtually doubling their salaries."

All of which shows the direction of the wind, and that the "inflorence" is already at work. Both of these papers are boosting the rally--although one is labelled Democratic and the other Republican.

This is written before the rally at Cape is pulled off, and I venture the prediction that no noise will be made there about the state administration--not even if state officials are present. They are about to be paid, and they can't afford to. The people know too much. The attempt to loot the school fund of over half a million dollars is too well understood, and Barker's blowing both hot and cold as to the legality of the attempted grab has only made them ridiculous.

Politicians and their organizers will stand for almost anything so long as they are satisfied the people don't know any better. But when they are convinced that the people know, then it is different. They back up and come with another bunch of "good" men of exactly the same kind--but unknown to the general public.

But I am anxious to see what the Scott county patriots will do. Certainly the Jeff. City crowd stuck close to them in the auditing matter, and it would be the limit of ingratitude for them not to stand by the state administration under any circumstances.

By Eugene V. Debs.

THE PIOUS RETAINERS

It may be set down as a rule that the gentry who constitute the self-appointed protectorate of religious salvation, and who accuse Socialists of being infidels, and Socialism of being infidelity, are themselves servile hypocrites who are profiting by the ignorance and superstition of their dupes, and using the cloak of religion in which to practice their pious fraud and imposition.

Their pretended solicitude for religion and the spiritual salvation of the dear people is a sham. What they really fear is not that religion will be destroyed, but that hypocrisy and false pretense will be uncovered.

These pious misfits, who do not know what real religion is, are all one in raising the hue and cry against Socialism in the name of religion. Most of them have never read a chapter of Socialist economics and are as utterly ignorant of what Socialism really means--deliberately misrepresenting it to receive the stipend and the "well done" from their capitalist masters.

These pious pickets of capitalist prostitution religion in the service of mammon. Of all men on earth, they are the least fit to speak in the name of religion. They have no religion or they would not serve in such a degenerate role.

They are full of cant, roll their eyes heavenward and glory in their creed, but of real religion, the spiritual influence which exalts man and consecrates him to the loving service of his fellow-men, they are as destitute as is the arctic region of sun-flowers. Christ knew these pious imposters perfectly and denounced them as hypocrites and enemies of the people.

It is false and slanderous to charge that Socialism aims to destroy religion. The truth is that Socialism proposes to destroy the conditions which make religion impossible.

It is the veriest sarcasm to talk about religion in the cannibalism of the present system in which men devour each other like hyenas, and the millions who are robbed of what they produce sink in hopeless poverty, while their sons are driven into crime and their daughters into prostitution.

Never, until this brute struggle for existence is ended, and our industrial life is organized upon the basis of democratic mutualism, will religion come to abide with men--not the religion, so-called, written in narrow creeds and heartless dogmas, but of loving deeds written in the hearts of men whose brethren are all mankind.

TAKEN AT HIS WORD.

He--I would go to the end of the earth for you.

She--Good-bye, Judge.

## THE BOYS "STRIKE."

In ridiculing the efforts of a dozen boys working in the box factory at Farnell to get in wages a little more of their product, the Tribune of that place says:

"The superintendent refused to grant their request, and the boys declared a 'strike,' believing that in doing so they would either get the increase or 'bust up the factory.' The foreman met them and asked them what was up. The boys told him, and he took them back into the office and requested the cashier to pay them off. Now, there are twelve boys out of employment and twelve places in the factory to be filled, unless the 'strike' has been declared off and the strikers have gone back to work, convinced that 'half a loaf is better than no loaf at all.'"

These boys are, of course, children of the poor. They should be taught to obey their masters. Not word is said about the justice of the demands of the boys. But that doesn't matter. "A half loaf is better than no loaf at all."

The age of the boys is not given, but we may assume that they are of school age--otherwise they would not be referred to as "boys." There is a compulsory school law in this state, and if this law is being violated, it does not concern the Tribune in the least. It is sufficient if the Tribune reminds the boys that they must not rebel and that "half loaf is better than no loaf at all."

But the Kicker is glad to see this spirit of rebellion in the young. It proves that the old sop and dope handed out by the retainers of capitalism is not taking root among them as firmly as it did among their elders. Child slavery is the disgrace of the present age, and will destroy any nation that permits it to continue. The human is the only animal that feeds upon its young.

Saturday a well-informed railroad man at Farnell said there were about 100 men--many with families--out of work at Farnell and Illinois. This in spite of the street work going on there. But the Tribune there don't seem to know anything about this.

Great Heavens! The president is going to get married and we will have to read the slush in the newspapers until it happens in December. From present appearances we are threatened with a worse dose than when Speaker Clark's daughter got married. The so-called news that is dishied up to us is sure some dope. But it takes this sort of rubbish to entertain the people and keep them from thinking.

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## TAKEN AT HIS WORD.

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## WOMEN AND THEIR FIGHT.

E. V. Debs in Riprap.

Woman's battle for the ballot is being waged with increasing intensity in every state of the Union. Eleven states have already wiped away the stain and given woman the ballot. A number of other states have granted a limited franchise.

This is an especially important year for the women in their fight for their political rights. Four Eastern states, to-wit, New York, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts and New Jersey vote on a constitutional amendment this fall to grant women their political rights. This amendment is being fought viciously by all the powers that maintain sweating helms and the white slave traffic.

Every socialist and every one else capable of realizing the cruel injustice done to woman in depriving her the right to vote and to have a share in the government under which she lives, will appreciate the importance of this issue and work with all the energy to have the amendment which wipes out the dishonor of these states adopted by an overwhelming majority.

The man who is so wanting in sense of fairness and common justice as to deny to woman the rights he claims for himself is a living certificate of the absolute necessity of releasing woman from the ignorant and brutal domination.

## RAILROAD RECEIVERSHIPS

From the Milwaukee Leader.

The United States Government is now operating 82 railroads having a mileage of 41,988 miles and capitalized at \$2,264,000,000. These roads are being conducted by federal courts because of the failure of private operation.

Nominally these roads are operated by receivers because they are bankrupt. These receivers are appointed by federal courts and are under the direct supervision of the judges of these courts who are responsible for the operation of the roads.

No one has ever suggested that federal judges are selected because of their ability to operate railroads, although they are frequently chosen for their willingness to let the railroads operate them. Nevertheless, whenever a railroad is looted by its owners or for any other reason fails to make a profit, it is handed over to a federal court for management.

The court operates the road until it is once more profitable and then returns it to the owners. At the present time the mileage operated by the courts is greater than the total railway mileage of any other country in the world except European and Asiatic Russia combined. It is far greater than the amount operated by any nation in the world having government owned railroads.

Yet the wise men of business in this country never tire of warning of the danger of government owned and operated railroads.

## AMONG THE BONE-HEADS.

From the Wall Street Journal.

In these days when all persons feel themselves free to debate all questions at all times and places, a bit of old history from the Journal of Education shows that this was not always so.

This educational magazine says that in 1827 an application was made to the school board of Lancaster, Ohio, for the school-house for a debate on the question, "Are Railroads Practical or Not?"

The board refused to consent to the opening of the school-house for a debate on such a foolish proposition and made its answer a formal part of the proceedings, a part of which reads:

"You are welcome to use the school-house to debate all proper questions in, but such things as railroads and telegraphs are impossibilities and RANK INFIDELITIES. There is nothing in the Word of God about them. I God had designed that his intelligent creatures should travel at the frightful speed of 15 miles an hour by steam, he would clearly have foretold it thru his Holy Prophets. It is a device of satan to lead immortal souls down to hell."

## WAR IN A NET-SHELL.

From the Chicago Journal.

Here is a Chinese student's summary of the war's causes, as published in a Shanghai paper: "Now there is a great battle in Europe. This began because the prince of Austria went to Serbia with his wife. One man of Serbia killed him. Austria was angry and so wrote Serbia. Germany wrote a letter to Austria. I will help you. Russia wrote a letter to Serbia. I will help you. France did not want to fight, but they got ready for a fight. Germany wrote a letter to France. 'You don't get ready or I will fight you in nine hours.' Germany, to fight them, pass Belgium. Belgium says, 'I am a country; I am not a road.' And Belgium wrote a letter to England about Germany to help him. So England help Belgium." Who can do better in the same space?

## HIS METHOD.

"Casey," said Pat, "how do yez tell 'th' age of a fowl?"

"O' can always tell by the teeth," said Casey.

"By the teeth?" exclaimed Pat.

"But a fowl has no teeth."

"No," admitted Casey, "but O' have."

If you want the truth, you must read the unmuzzled Kicker.

Stick to the unmuzzled Kicker.

## IN THE SOUTHEAST.

## What the People are Doing in Other Counties that are Near.

Judge McCarthy of the newly established circuit just below us is entitled to credit for having created a board of visitors to investigate how the poor and the prisoners are treated and cared for in Pemiscot county. The keeping of the poor and the prisoners is a matter of business, and it too often happens that the greed of the keeper causes great misery in Pemiscot county, where the officials were found \$37,000 short and got away with it, the keeper of the poor farm is paid \$12 per month for the care of each pauper--more than twice what is paid in Scott county. Of the accommodations furnished, the board of visitors reports: "It is a deplorable fact that there is not a screen to a door or window and the flies and mosquitoes are both annoying and numerous. The dining room during the summer months is a small shed room, badly screened, some fifteen feet from the main living quarters. One long narrow table and two rude benches supply furniture. Since there is no provision for fire in winter the meals are served in one room of main building, where some of inmates, the women, are compelled to occupy it as a living room in the day. The bedding for inmates consists of ordinary ticking filled with straw or shavings, a few coverings of the most inexpensive and unwashable variety. These are much soiled and worn. On closer inspection that was found to be the least cause for complaint as the beds, without an exception were alive with bedbugs." Of the jail the report says that in three years and 9 months it held 915 prisoners of which 119 were sent to the penitentiary, and that as high as 45 people had been confined at one time in these small quarters--hardly standing room. Sanitary conditions were reported as good as possible under the circumstances.

Hog cholera had appeared in Cape county and the farm adviser says of it: "After being practically free of cholera since last season, and only a small amount of it then, the disease has appeared in a community northeast of Oak Ridge. As yet only some five or six herds are affected, and it is hoped that prompt measures will control it. There is no cure for hog cholera, and it practically exterminates a bunch of hogs if once gets a foothold. There are many advertised cures, but they do not cure. The best course for the hog-owner to follow is to keep his hogs healthy and away from infection as far as possible. Do not allow them to run on creeks that drain infected territory; keep them away from other hogs; do not allow neighbors who may have the disease on their premises to visit your hog lot, and see that all carcasses that are burned. The last says that all hogs dying of contagious or infectious disease must be burned within twenty-four hours; also that a man having the disease on his place must notify his neighbors."

Dexter Messenger--Harvesting began in the rice field of George Begley about one week ago and he has something over 100 acres out and shocked. There is a trifling over 200 acres in this field and it will take possibly four or five days longer to complete cutting the crop. In appearance the rice field resembles a wheat field except the stalks are much thicker on the ground and of coarser fibre. A sample of the heads and stalks of this rice has been on display in the postoffice window all this week and has attracted considerable attention.

A Pemiscot county farmer and his wife went to Caruthersville lately to do some trading. Of course, the husband is the head of the family and carries the pocket book. He left mother at the store and went out to visit the tax collector who stands behind the bar at the saloon. Night came and mother became alarmed. She sent out for father, but he had forgotten all about her and gone home. Mother had no money, and charitable people took care of her for the night. Mother hasn't got sense enough to vote, but father has. He runs the government.

Stoddard county is under township organization--as all counties would be if the people understood it. The Stoddard county court refused to build bridges in the different townships and one of the communities applied to the attorney general for the law. "That official holds that the county must build all bridges costing over \$100. The people of Scott county don't seem to see that two sections of the county have what is of the same nature as township organization, but less extensive. They are called the Sikeston and Oran special road districts."

Portageville Missourian--Jim Grivin pulled up a monster beet out of S. S. Thompson's garden the other day and brought it to this office to add to our agricultural exhibit. The beet weighed nine pounds, and was a firm, well matured production.

Stick to the unmuzzled Kicker.

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Wilson Cramer of Jackson is regarded as one of the best judges of the law in this end of the state. Recently, in a matter in which he was interested, he took issue with a construction placed on the law by the attorney-general's office at Jefferson City and very courteously wrote and informed them. The reply to this veteran lawyer contained this impudent sentence: "This department may have guessed wrong on the legislative intent and the supreme court may guess it wrong too, but its guess will count and others will be for naught held and esteemed." Gosh, but those pin-heads who get into office do think they are "it."

Between its yelps of Wilson prosperity the Pemiscot Argus sees visions of a hard winter, and suggests that the people of Caruthersville take action to protect them against unworthy beggars. The Argus wants the beggars to "show credentials of worthiness" before being permitted to beg. Right here is room for another law to furnish jobs for bum politicians. The office of beggar inspector could be created with its chief at Jefferson City and thousands of deputies scattered over the state.

Lin Grissom of Fredericktown won out over the authorities in his dog tax case. He refused to pay because his dog stayed at home. But he hired two lawyers and this point was not raised. According to the law, as declared in Fredericktown, a dog tax must be collected the same as any other personal tax--not by the arrest of the owner, but by the sale of the property. Hence we may expect a dog sale advertised up there soon.

The Malden Merit does not seem to have a very favorable opinion of the office-holders of its own party. Of the usual "get together" meetings before the opening of the campaign it says: "The latest plan to 'eliminate' undesirable candidates is by means of a convention. The better way would be to put them all together in a hall somewhere and let them eliminate each other after the fashion of cannibal crows."

Mrs. Armstrong was not appointed justice of the peace of Rynd township in Cape county by the county court. No, sir! Wagon man's place is in the kitchen. It takes the animal to administer justice as she says.

Three train loads of California onions passed over the Frisco for St. Louis and eastern points last week. Each train had 16 cars--a total of 48 cars of onions.

Hubert Stricker of Prices Landing and Miss Stella Bowling of Texas Bend were married at the Catholic church, Charleston, Monday of last week.

## A GOOD SOLDIER.

By Jack London.

Young man the lowest a man in your life is to be a good soldier. The good soldier never tries to distinguish right from wrong. He only obeys. If he is ordered to fire on his fellow citizen, on his friends, on his neighbors, on his relatives, he obeys without hesitation. If he is ordered to fire down a crowded street when the poor are clamoring for bread, he obeys, and sees the gray hairs of age stained with red and the life tide gushing from the breast of women, feeling neither remorse nor sympathy. If he is ordered off as one of a firing squad to execute a hero or benefactor, he fires without hesitation, though he knows the bullet will pierce the noblest heart that ever beat in human breast.

A good soldier is a blind, heartless, soulless, murderous machine. He is not a man. He is not even a brute, for brutes only kill in self-defense. All that is human in him, all that is divine in him, all that constitutes the man, has been sworn away when he took the enlistment roll. His mind, conscience, eye, his very soul, are in keeping of his officer.

No man can fall lower than a soldier--it is a depth beneath which we cannot go.

## JUST WHAT YOU WANT.

There can be no absolute private title to land. All private titles, whether called fee simple or otherwise, are and must be subordinate to the public title. The Socialist Party tries to prevent land from being used for the purpose of exploitation and speculation. It demands the collective possession, control or management of land to whatever extent may be necessary to attain that end. It is not opposed to occupation and possession of land by those using it in a useful and bona fide manner without exploitation.--Land Plank from the National Socialist platform.

If you are a checker player you know that there is such a thing as getting your "men" in such a position that no matter which way you move you lose. This is the position capitalism is in today--every move capitalism makes, it Read the unmuzzled Kicker.